



# The Royal School

*Wolverhampton*

## Early Years Policy

|                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Author                   | Hayley Green                           |
| Job title                | Deputy Head of Primary                 |
| Date                     | September 2023                         |
| Version no.              | 3                                      |
| Review frequency         | September 2025                         |
| Approving body/committee | N/A                                    |
| Date approved            | 18.10.23                               |
| Governor signature       |  |
| Target audience          | Teaching staff and teaching assistants |

## **Aims**

This policy aims to ensure:

- That children access a broad and balanced curriculum that gives them the broad range of knowledge and skills needed for good progress through school and life.
- Quality and consistency in teaching and learning so that every child makes good progress and no child gets left behind.
- A close working partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.
- Every child is included and supported through equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice.

## **Legislation**

This policy is based on requirements set out in the [statutory framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage \(EYFS\)](#) for 2023.

## **Structure of the EYFS**

The 90 place Reception at the Royal Primary School is split into three classes. Each class has a teacher and teaching assistant who take the role of a key person for the children within their class. The Reception teachers and teaching assistants work as part of a team; allowing for the children from all three classes have opportunities to work together during free flow both indoors and outdoors, accessing shared continuous provision.

Collaboration and teamwork are at the heart of our approach, with Reception teachers and teaching assistants working closely together to create a nurturing and stimulating learning environment. Reception staff consistently engage in planning and coordination to ensure a seamless and progressive learning journey tailored to the unique needs and developmental stages of each child in our care.

Children are taught in whole class groups, small groups, pairs and individually. Through the ShREC approach, practitioners use both adult led, and child led activities to engage with our pupils and move their learning forward. We are dedicated to providing excellent pastoral care and education to those children in our care.

In Early Years we acknowledge the potential for learning in every activity and situation that arises. Our aim is to provide a secure and stimulating environment in which children flourish and learn to make sense of the real world. We make the children feel valued and give them the confidence to become active learners. Our activities provide first hand experiences through play and discussion, children are encouraged to interact with others, to move about and explore a wide variety of learning situations. There are well-planned areas of provision in the wide range of activities, resources and materials available organised into key areas: home corner; art attack; construction site; cosy corner; small world and outdoors. Opportunities are provided for sustained activity and continuous provision, as well as spontaneous, self-chosen activities. It is important to us that children experience success, have fun and enjoy themselves whilst learning.

Both planning and observations formats highlight the importance of the characteristics of teaching and learning. Teamed with our school values and learning behaviours, practitioners consider how their practice reflects upon and provides opportunities for the different ways children learn.

## **Curriculum**

In Reception, we aim to provide our children with an engaging and exciting curriculum that develops natural curiosity, awe and wonder. Our curriculum is child led, driven by their interests, needs and current attainment to ensure that all children make progress in the seven areas of learning.

Our framework is guided by the Development Matters, led by our children and enables opportunities for first-hand experiences. Our curriculum aims to engage and enthuse all learners through play in a secure environment with effective adult support allowing the children to explore, investigate and enjoy the learning experience. We help them to practice and develop ideas, concepts and skills in a unique and non-threatening way, without fear of failure.

We develop resilient, independent learners who are well prepared for their continued learning journey into KS1.

The EYFS curriculum and the Foundation Stage curriculum areas:

Prime Areas:

- Personal, Social and Emotional development
- Communication and Language
- Physical development

Specific Areas:

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Expressive Art & Design
- Understanding the world

None of these areas can be delivered in isolation from the others. They are equally important and depend on each other. All areas are delivered through a balance of adult led and child-initiated activities. Through play and practical experiences children learn about the world and their place in it. They learn through first hand experiences, talk, books and equipment. We set realistic yet challenging expectations that meet the needs of our children. We achieve this by planning to meet the needs of boys and girls, children with special educational needs, children who are more able, children with disabilities, children from all social and cultural backgrounds, children of different ethnic groups and those from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We have adopted a scaffolding up approach rather than differentiating down to enable all learners to be a part of the mainstream curriculum.

Adult led planning is informed by assessment and observations. All adult led sessions identified on the timetable are planned for each week along with continuous provision. Challenge cards mirror the continuous provision each week and children are encouraged to become independent learners. Reception data is updated every term. Data is analysed to identify weaknesses and strengths as well as highlighting and carefully monitoring areas of concerns for specific children. Vulnerable groups such as PP/EYPP children are tracked and areas of weakness are also identified to provide a focus for the following term.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is precise, sharply focused around identifying and tracking vulnerable learners to ensure provision and support can be scaffolded up to their needs. Assessment including daily

observations are monitored and used to secure timely interventions and support, based on a comprehensive knowledge of the child. This assessment informs, enhances and develops our long term plan each half term. Through the use of data analysis, gaps and strengths are highlighted to provide a focus for adult led planning, continuous provision planning and objective led planning for the half term ahead.

Within the first six weeks of the reception, children will complete the Reception Baseline Assessment. Practitioners will also use their professional judgement informed by a range of observations and teacher knowledge gained from interactions, teachable moments and adult led sessions to provide baseline judgements across the EYFS areas of learning.

As the year progresses children are monitored on their development and progress in all areas of development. Examples of children's learning, showing their individual stage of development are built up throughout the year. Provision is made for these observations and assessments through experience and play with a balance of adult led and child-initiated opportunities as well as challenges woven into the continuous provision linked closely to assessment. Progress is recorded by observing and assessing children considering the characteristics of effective learning using the "tapestry" app on staff ipads which allow for video footage and photographs to be annotated and linked to areas of learning. Planned observations are "objective led" and are formed through data analysis to ensure the objectives we target are those identified as the weaker areas of learning for that particular term.

Characteristics of effective learning assessments are evident throughout all our observations. Characteristics of effective learning are used as a tool to support children in understanding the many ways they learn. At The Royal we identify and plan for those moments by making the link to our learning behaviours. We have made the link between the CofEL and our learning behaviours on tapestry by creating bespoke flags. These observations drive our planning and questioning and thus, creating a real journey of their learning and how this has developed throughout the year.

Areas of concern are highlighted for children who are not working on track. Effective systems such as this help all practitioners involved in each child's learning to have an overview of their current understanding and attainment as well as supporting them in identifying the gaps in learning and next steps which in turns informs our planning and continuous provision.

At the **end of the EYFS**, staff complete the EYFS profile for each child. Pupils are assessed against the 17 early learning goals, indicating whether they are:

- Meeting expected levels of development
- Not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging')

The profile reflects ongoing observations, and discussions with parents and/or carers. The results of the profile are shared with parents and/or carers for their child.

The profile is moderated internally (referring to the Development Matters [guidance](#)) and in partnership with other local schools within the CN3 Network, to ensure consistent assessment judgements. EYFS profile data is submitted to the local authority upon request.

### **Working with Parents and Carers**

We recognise that children learn and develop well when there's a strong partnership between staff and parents and/or carers.

Parents and/or carers are kept up to date with their child's progress and development with access to their child's learning journey on tapestry. EYFS profile helps to provide parents and/or carers with a well-rounded picture of their child's knowledge, understanding and abilities. Each child is assigned a key person within their class who helps to ensure that their learning and care is tailored to meet their needs.

Class teachers and teaching assistants begin to build relationships during their initial home visits and support parents and/or carers in guiding their child's development at home. Our class teachers work closely with our inclusion also helps families to engage with more specialist support, if appropriate.

Parents and carers receive two mid-year reports and a final full report over the academic year. They are also invited to stay and play sessions and three parent's evenings across the three terms.

## **Safeguarding and Welfare Procedures**

We recognise that children learn best when they are healthy safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. We follow safeguarding and welfare requirements to provide a welcoming, safe and stimulating environment where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence.

Please see our whole school safeguarding policy.

## **Review of Policy**

Policy written: September 2023

Policy Reviewed: